

## **NORTHGATE STAKEHOLDERS GROUP MEETING SUMMARY**

**North Seattle Community College  
ED 2843A in the Dr. Peter Ku Education Building  
Tuesday, July 12, 2005, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

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The Northgate Stakeholders Group (Group) held its sixteenth meeting at North Seattle Community College on Tuesday, July 12, 2005 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The purposes of the meeting were to:

- Approve meeting summary #15;
- Review and discuss results of modeling and criteria for the Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP) and provide advice regarding the criteria;
- Hear a status report on NE 103<sup>rd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE Design; and
- Hear results of a potential Seattle Comprehensive Plan amendment analysis.

### **Welcome**

Ron LaFayette, Chair, convened the meeting at 5:00 pm and welcomed Stakeholders and observers to the meeting.

### ***August 21, 2005 Northgate Festival Announcement***

Before turning to the business of the meeting, the Chair invited Mr. Amani Harris of the Northgate Chamber of Commerce to address the Stakeholders. Mr. Harris began by thanking the Stakeholders for their hard work which was important to the entire Northgate area. He then announced plans for the first annual Northgate Festival that the Chamber was planning in consultation with many of the major institutions in the Northgate area. He reported that the Chamber had gotten a \$15,000 grant to support the festival and that the Northgate Arts Council had played a leading role in developing the festival. The festival, he said, would be held on Sunday, August 21 in the Northwest Hospital Outpatient Center parking lot between 11 AM and 6 PM. Those planning the event wanted to contact the representatives of the neighborhoods in the Northgate area and involve them in a banner project that would result in distinctive banners for each of the neighborhoods.

### ***Agenda Review***

After briefly reviewing the agenda for the meeting, Mr. LaFayette announced future dates for the Stakeholders calendars:

- Tuesday, October 4: Community Forum
- Thursday, October 13\*: Stakeholders Group Meeting

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\* At the meeting, the date of the next Stakeholders Group meeting was incorrectly noted as October 11.

He said that the purpose of the Community Forum would be to get public input on draft CTIP recommendations before the Stakeholders finalized their advice on the recommendations on October 13. He said that the CTIP Subcommittee would continue to work with Tony Mazzella of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and Mirai Associates to develop those recommendations.

### ***Northgate Status Report***

Jackie Kirn of the Office of Policy and Management reviewed a written status report on projects and activities in the Northgate area in the following categories (a handout in the members' packets):

#### **Northgate Civic Center**

- She showed a slide of the foundation that had been poured for the gymnasium and reported that the facility was expected to open next spring (2006).

#### **Northgate Commons**

- She reported that the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) was working on the contract rezone requests and would have recommendations later in the summer. She said the schedule would be posted at the website once it was established.
- She asked Miranda Maupin of Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to address the issue of fish passage that had been raised in the Community Forum. Ms. Maupin said that SPU had just begun discussions with the environmental agencies and said she anticipated they would include full discussion about fish and impacts. She said she expected they would see the water quality benefits downstream. She said SPU would do its best to help fish even though this project was not a habitat restoration project, but rather a water quality project. She said she hoped to have 30% design to show at the October 13 Stakeholders Group meeting.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NE and NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street Design**

- Ms. Kirn said there would be a status report on this issue later in the meeting. She noted that those involved in the street design had been waiting for the CTIP modeling results to feed into the design. Work was continuing, she said, on the sidewalks, funding, and shared parking, and Lorig, ERA Care, King County and the City were all working together.

#### **Northgate Mall Expansion**

- Ms. Kirn said that she expected permit conditions would be ready at the end of July, and demolition of the theater and the medical building could happen by fall – a tangible sign of progress. Next spring natural drainage and landscaping would be installed.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE Streetscape**

- Ms. Kirn reported that 90% design was ready and the project was on track for construction early in 2006.
- She said that work was continuing on the pedestrian system between Northgate and Northgate North.

#### **Northgate Arts Plan**

- She said she expected the plan to be issued in the fall.

In summary, she concluded that progress was continuing on all fronts.

### ***June 7 Community Forum Report***

The Chair then called on Stakeholders who had attended the June 7 Community Forum for a report. Velvea Maye said that the turnout was good and she thought it had gone well. Janet Way said she also thought it had gone well. She suggested that Stakeholders might want to present in panels at the October 4 Community Forum, as they had at the first Community Forum. Mr. LaFayette said there were more people than he had expected. In reply to a question, Mark Troxel replied that between 80 and 90 people had attended. He said he thought that the Forum had been informal, with good interaction. Ms. Way asked Mr. Troxel if she could send corrected language for a comment attributed to her that was included in the summary. He said she could.

### ***Approval of the April 26 Meeting Summary***

There were no corrections or additions to the draft summary of the April 26 meeting so it was approved as drafted.

### ***CTIP Modeling Results***

The Chair invited Tony Mazzella of SDOT and Tom Noguchi of Mirai Associates to present the CTIP modeling results. Before beginning his presentation, Mr. Mazzella introduced Susan Sanchez, SDOT Division Manager, and Julie Mercer Matlick, his supervisor. Mr. Mazzella prefaced his remarks by noting that the focus of the evening's discussion would be vehicles and traffic but this did not mean that SDOT had forgotten about pedestrians and bicyclists. He said that the suggestions they would bring to the Stakeholders in the fall would address the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists as well as traffic. Mr. Mazzella then walked the Stakeholders through a PowerPoint presentation which presented existing conditions and then described conditions expected in 2030 based on land use, employment, and population growth projections. (PowerPoint slides were in member packets.)

Mr. Mazzella said that SDOT would present ideas at the October meeting to fix some of the problems that are projected to occur. He said he would also want to discuss with the Stakeholders the "price" of the fixes, that is, how did the proposed improvements affect the natural landscape, other modes, etc.

In response to a question, Mr. Mazzella explained that level of service (LOS) meant the average speed of travel from one point to another. Level of service, he said, ranges from A (travel at the posted speed) to F (failing).

At the end of his presentation, the Stakeholders complimented both the presentation and the responsiveness and very helpful attitude that Mr. Mazzella and Mirai Associates had consistently shown at the CTIP Subcommittee meetings. (Applause)

### ***Discussion of Advice on CTIP Evaluation Criteria***

The Chair then asked David Harrison, facilitator, to lead the discussion of the draft advice on the CTIP evaluation criteria.

Mr. Harrison noted that traffic was integral to the success of all the other projects and developments at Northgate the Group had cared about and said he appreciated the seriousness with which the Stakeholders took traffic issues. He noted that draft advice and related materials

had been sent to the Stakeholders in advance of the meeting. He also noted that several people (Cheryl Klinker, John Lombard, and Janet Way) had emailed comments about the evaluation criteria. He pointed out that the draft advice they had received endorsed the plan, so if the plan were to change, the advice would still stand.

***Questions/Responses and Comments from the Discussion***

*Comment:* If level of service declines because of development, the logical response is go to the developer and tell him it's his responsibility to fix it.

*Response* (Colleen Mills): You cannot assume a single developer is responsible for everything. You must have some kind of logic.

*Response* (Sean Olesen): As a developer, I can say that developers do pay mitigation fees. A permit to construct a single family home in Seattle is \$10,000.

*Response* (Jackie Kirn): By law the City must ask a developer to identify traffic impacts and then, under the State Environmental Policy Act, DPD analyzes the impacts and is responsible for ensuring that traffic impacts are mitigated or improvements are provided. The City cannot grant permits without an analysis and mitigation.

*Response* (Kristian Kofoed, DPD): DPD uses level of service as a yardstick. For each new project there's a new baseline. The issues can be complicated because there is a lot of traffic that travels through Northgate as a result of regional growth. The capacity of the freeway system also affects city streets. The tools DPD can use as mitigation to reduce traffic impacts adjacent to a proposed development are traffic lights, turn lanes, and different access mechanisms. Mr. Kofoed said he would send a memo to the Stakeholders on options DPD had for mitigation.

*Question:* If a project were to push level of service to "F" and there was no way to mitigate, would DPD reject a project?

*Response:* Yes, or DPD might suggest that the project be reconfigured.

Mr. Harrison then suggested that the Stakeholders return to the evaluation criteria proposed for CTIP and review a memorandum that Mr. Mazzella had prepared to respond to the comments that the three Stakeholders had sent prior to the meeting.

A member expressed concern about the proposed weight for the criterion "environmental sustainability." In response, a Subcommittee member explained that the Subcommittee had looked at the criteria with the proposed weights. She said the whole group agreed that safety was most important. She said it was hard to make a change in the criteria weights because they were all related. If one went up, another one had to go down. Other members noted how intertwined the criteria were and pointed out that more than one of the criteria related to environmental sustainability. Mr. Mazzella pointed out that transportation projects that improved drainage or the installation of permeable sidewalks that reduced puddles for pedestrians would get extra points. During the ensuing discussion, a variety of proposals were offered to address the environmental sustainability criterion.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the advice as drafted. A member proposed an amendment that would have revised the environmental sustainability concept but it failed when it was not seconded.

The Stakeholders then voted on draft Advice #8 on CTIP Evaluation Criteria. The total was 13 members in favor of the draft advice and one member opposed. That member said she would provide a minority report to be included with the final advice.

### **Status Report on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NE and NE 103<sup>rd</sup>**

Julie Mercer Matlick (SDOT) reported that SDOT was continuing to work with King County, Lorig and Simon on a final design. She noted that 103<sup>rd</sup> between 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE – ft. was 60 ft. wide. They planned to add three feet on either side. Between 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE they planned to have 12-ft. sidewalks. A possible configuration, she said, could be an 8-ft. parking lane on the south side, two through lanes, and a 12-ft. lane on the north side. Between 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE there would be three lanes, possibly also a parking lane.

Ron Posthuma indicated that Metro had concluded it did not need a bus layover on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE; instead Metro will use the north side of 100<sup>th</sup> for bus layovers. He handed out a schematic that showed 12-ft. sidewalks, bulb-outs at intersections and three lanes for traffic.

Mr. Posthuma called on Michael Boonsripisal, traffic engineer for Metro, to present a visual simulation of the results of the modeling that Metro had done, using CTIP modeling results, to analyze the intersections and determine the levels of control needed. This analysis, he explained, had showed them that the lane widths on NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Ave. did not need to be adjusted and were adequate through 2030.

In response to a question about the reason for a 4-way stop rather than a light at NE 103<sup>rd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE, Mr. Posthuma explained that signals were already located at 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. NE. When lights are too close together, he said, it is hard to get the system to work well. He said that Metro had concluded that a 4-way stop was preferable to an unsigned intersection but that it was possible a signal might be needed. Ms. Mercer Matlick added that warrants were required to add signals.

When a member noted that he occasionally saw collisions in the simulation, Mr. Boonsripisal explained that what the group was seeing was only a simulation and that it wasn't 100% accurate. He explained the programming choices in the model that would have led to the seeming collisions.

A member asked about the 40-ft. radius shown at the driveway at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE, which she saw as a concern from a pedestrian standpoint. Mr. Posthuma responded that the radius was needed for delivery trucks. The member reiterated the Stakeholders' goal to make the area pedestrian friendly. Mr. Posthuma assured the Group that Metro fully understood that.

In response to a question, Mr. Posthuma indicated that there would be a traffic light at NE 103<sup>rd</sup>.

Another member raised concern about the possible narrowing of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NE that would occur when the transit center moved westward and a Link light rail station was built over the street. She pointed out that 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE is a major access point for residents who live west of I-5 and she was concerned that capacity would be lost.

Another member wanted Mr. Posthuma to verify that his projections took into account the transition of the Park & Ride lot at 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and NE 112<sup>th</sup> to a park in the future. He assured her that they did.

### **DPD Report on Housing Analysis in Northgate**

Kristian Kofoed reported that DPD had received a directive from the City Council, instructing the Department to look at whether or not amendments to the Seattle Comprehensive Plan were needed to encourage development of housing at Northgate. He reported that DPD was going to do an analysis of housing in the coming year that would address the housing issues raised in Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck's proposed amendments. Mr. Kofoed committed to continuing to update the Stakeholders on this issue.

### **Public Comment**

The Chair called on Ken Meyer to make a comment.

Mr. Meyer pointed out that the Stakeholders' work had focused on the revitalization of Northgate. He recalled instances when Northgate had been compared unfavorably with Alderwood Mall to the north. He reported that he had been to Alderwood Mall earlier in the week and had noted that the parking lots were full and that wide boulevards surrounded the mall, making traffic flow well. He contrasted that situation with Northgate which, he felt, was trying to maintain an almost "rural character." He predicted that Northgate would not be able to compete with Alderwood until it had the kind of mobility that Alderwood had. With respect to the proposed theater in the Lorig development, he said he had visited Mountlake Theater, which seats 2000, and had counted every parking spot. He contrasted it with the 3600 seats coming to the cinema at Northgate. He added that, when he heard concerns about curb radii, he did not think Stakeholders were facing up to the real problems.

### **Adjournment**

The Chair reminded Stakeholders of the October 4 Community Forum and encouraged them to attend. He thanked the members for the time and energy they contributed to the Stakeholders Group and wished them a good summer vacation.

He adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.

### **Meeting Attendance**

Representatives and Alternates of the **Northgate Stakeholders Group** in attendance were:

**Metro/King County:** Ron Posthuma

**Haller Lake Community Club:** Rep. Velva Maye, Alt. Sue Geving

**Victory Heights Community Council:** Rep. Brad Cummings

**Northgate Chamber of Commerce:** Rep. Shaiza Damji

**Thornton Creek Alliance:** Rep. John Lombard, Alt. Cheryl Klinker

**Thornton Creek Legal Defense:** Rep. Janet Way, Alt. Janet Brucker

**North Seattle Community College:** Rep. Ron LaFayette, Alt. Bruce Kieser

**Northwest Hospital:** Rep. Chris Roth

**Senior Housing:** Rep. Jeanne Hayden  
**Renters/Condominium Owners:** Rep. Brad Mason  
**Multi-Family Housing Developers:** Colleen Mills  
**Businesses Outside the Mall:** Rep. Michelle Rupp  
**At-large:** Rep. Shawn Oleson  
At-large: Rep. Marilyn Firlotte, Alt. Mike Vincent

Members of the Triangle Associates facilitation team included David Harrison and Vicki King.